

CITY OF MILFORD DELAWARE

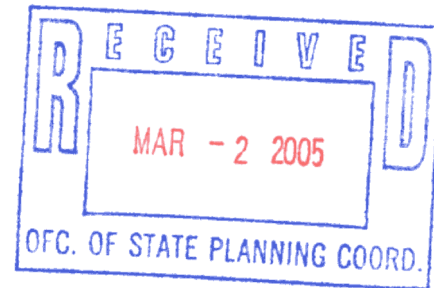


"THE GARDEN CITY OF TWIN COUNTIES"

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March 1, 2005

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Ms. Connie Holland, AICP
State Planning Coordinator
Office of State Planning Coordination
Suite 7, 3rd Floor
Dover, DE 19901



**Subject: City of Milford 2nd Annual Report
and 2005 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan**

Dear Connie,

The City of Milford is pleased to submit its 2nd Annual Report on the Comprehensive Plan, as required by Title 22 § 702(g) of the *Delaware Code*. As required by code, this report describes the implementation of the plan, and identifies current development activities, new development trends and City Planning initiatives. Also included is a discussion of the amendments to the Plan that had been reviewed by your office through meetings and the PLUS process in 2004.

Continuing Plan Implementation

On February 28, 2003 the Milford City Council adopted the 2003 Update of the Comprehensive Plan. In June 2004 the plan was amended to address growth in the south of the City along US Route 113. A comprehensive amendment is included with this report to address mapping inconsistencies from the original plan, new land use designations and growth scenarios, an extensive multi-agency conservation initiative to the east of the City, and refinements to the City's transportation plan. The Plan and its maps are posted on the City's website for public use.

Economic Development Implementation

In 2004 the City became a participating jurisdiction in the "Live Near Your Work" program spearheaded by the Delaware State Housing Authority (DHSA). The program is a cooperative

partnership between local government, businesses and the State to provide financial assistance to workers who purchase housing within walking or bicycling distance to their work place. The City's participation in the program takes action on the principle of maintaining a diversified economy while discouraging sprawl.

One of the City's older commercial shopping center, located on ground that overlooks the River is being re-developed. An un-used supermarket that had been the center's anchor is being redeveloped to a large restaurant/bar/meeting facility. The project takes advantage of existing parking and the proximity to the City's Riverwalk and Bicentennial Park, blending economic development with conservation and recreation.

Housing Implementation

Residential properties in both Kent and Sussex counties have been nominated for consideration for Community Block Grant for renovation and restoration. The 2005 amendment addresses infrastructure and annexation issues to forward additional, affordable housing in both Kent and Sussex Counties. Interfaith Housing, Inc., which currently manages low-cost apartment housing on Route 113/Rt. 1 in Kent County has requested annexation in order to lower its water rates from out-of-town to in-town rates, and to take advantage City services to proposed new low-cost single family residences. The City is also working with the Milford Housing Development Corporation, a non-profit developer, in locating additional, affordable housing in southeastern area of Milford (Sussex County).

Cultural Resources Plan

The Milford Museum received grants for exterior and interior renovations. Renovation and maintenance continues on the Parson Thorne Mansion, sponsored by the Milford Historical Society. The City continues to support applications from individual property owners for inclusion on the Nation Register of Historic Places.

The Parks Plan

The Mispillion Greenway Master Plan has progressed ahead of its anticipated schedule. New lands have been added to the City's river front and an extensive partnership has been grown to promote the careful development of Goat Island and adjacent property into a natural demonstration site of native plants and various wetland communities.

The Recreation Plan

Redevelopment of an abandoned dry cleaners site was completed in 2004 and now provides expanded open space and over-flow parking for Little League, tee-ball leagues and other youth programs at Marvel Park. The Mispillion Riverwalk network that links pedestrian and bikeways on both sides of the River is expanding into Phase 20. Design of Phase 20 is nearly complete and will extend to the network westward to the vicinity of Milford's original mill site and early manufacturing center.

Environmental Plan

The City of Milford was designated a Tree City USA, established its tree ordinance, and hosted a successful Arbor Day Observance and Proclamation in 2004. The second annual Bug and Bud Festival will continue the promotion of trees as an integral part of the urban landscape. The City is participating in a wide coalition of organizations and government agencies to promote conservation efforts on the tidal reaches of the Mispillion River and is taking the lead in a new program to locate and eliminate areas of chinaberry (an invasive species) infestation.

In December of 2004, the City reviewed and accepted the revised draft delineation for wellhead areas associated with the City's public water wells.

Annexations

Since the last Report, the following properties were annexed into the City, under the OSPC's new Plan of Services review process.

Property Reference	Tax Parcel ID	Area
Slenker Land Corp. (Central Parke at Milford)	Sussex 1-30-6.00-108, -109 Sussex 1-30-3.00-264, -264.01	+/-188 acres
Virginia Kennedy et al. (Simpson Property enclaves)	Sussex 1-30-3.00 -264.04	+/-22.2 acres
Matlinds Estates	Sussex 3-30-11.00-6.07 and 351 thru 410	+/-41 acres
First Baptist Church	Sussex 1-30-3.06-127, -127, -128	+/-9.2 acres

Current Development Activities

The final renovations of properties damaged by the fire on North Walnut Street are largely completed, and a new restaurant/pub is under construction in the center of the block where the damage was heaviest. Renovations of other buildings within the downtown area are underway as businesses are expanding. The Milford Museum is also undergoing renovations at this time.

Beyond the City's center, new housing and businesses are under design, in the permitting stages or are now under construction. A map showing the major residential, commercial and public works projects under way within Milford is enclosed.

New Development Trends

Interest in being part of the City continues to be high for developers of both commercial and residential projects. Projects are being proposed with designs that include connection to the City's existing network of local streets and sidewalks. Design styles are being proposed that

coordinate with Milford's older neighborhoods, including small lots in urban blocks and clustered housing layouts with provision for neighborhood commercial uses. The 2005 Amendment updated the Land Use maps to reflect the City's interest in promoting the urban, mixed used development that has served the City well in its historic past and today.

City Planning Initiatives

State Strategies Comments and Compromises

The City was an active participant in the review and comment upon the State Strategies descriptions and maps proposed and adopted in 2004. In particular, the City took issue with the States vision of Level 4 strategy areas immediately south of the City limits in southeast Sussex County. A well-publicized transportation study, to locate a major connector road between DE 1 and US Route 113 is anticipated to promote significant growth south of the City, and the State Strategies were overlain by an "Area of Study," in response to Milford's concerns. Since that time, the transportation plans have been further refined and the City has proceeded with a major amendment to the Comprehensive Plan that reflects the new transportation projects.

Water and Wastewater Facilities Management Plans

The City is wrapping up a significant evaluation of its wastewater and water systems. The studies included updating the City's facilities system maps, developing demand and capacity comparisons for geographic sectors of the City, estimating long-term growth for the sectors based on build-out scenarios, redevelopment potential and eventual annexations.

The City has awarded a construction contract for replacement of one of its oldest wells, and evaluation of three additional site for future water production and treatment facilities.

The City's wastewater pumping stations and collection catchments have been assessed. The least-cost alternative for expansion is an innovative approach that allows the City to abandon the Washington Street Pump Station that is located on the Riverwalk, and adjacent to the skateboard park and Greater Milford Chamber of Commerce offices.

2005 Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan

On February 5, 2004, representatives from the City of Milford and Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc., met with David Edgell and Ann Marie Townsend, Office of State Planning, to discuss the changing development conditions in Milford and to assess the 2003 Comprehensive Plan. A wide range of issues were identified for review and study, including a significant Transportation planning study being conducted by DelDOT, the City's infrastructure and growing demands for annexation in both Kent and Sussex County. The City received a \$10,000 Livable Delaware Planning Grant in May 2004.

In July 2004, the Comprehensive Plan was amended with Appendix 8, Southwest Annexation Area. At the same time, at the Office of State Planning's recommendation, the remaining updates would be submitted as a single amendment that would reflect more specifically the developing regional transportation proposals.

At the February 2004 meeting, it was agreed that the City's Comprehensive Plan should be amended, as follows:

Population Projections

Annexation, including Analysis of Surrounding Land Uses and Annexation Plan
Community Development Strategy and Community Design Plan

Land Use Plan

Infrastructure and Utilities, including Water, Wastewater and Transportation Plan

Government Services, Community Facilities and Recreation Plans

An amended Comprehensive Plan has been submitted for PLUS review in conformance with the discussions at those meetings, informational meetings with landowners and Sussex County delegates, and significant participation with DelDOT on the Thompsonville Interchange project, and the US Route 113 North/South planning study.

The City appreciates OSPC's assistance to date in the planning process and looks forward to presenting the City of Milford's accomplishments in the years to come.

Sincerely,



Karen Emory Brittingham
City of Milford Planning Department

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Copy: Ms. Elizabeth Brown, P.G. - Davis, Bowen & Friedel, Inc.